

Prison Ministry Reaches Out to War Orphans in Sierra Leone

Crossroad Bible Institute is opening a new satellite campus in Sierra Leone, one of the poorest countries in the world.

The campus, which is CBI's 18th international satellite and its eighth campus in Africa, is poised to serve the prisoners of this struggling country as it recovers from a devastating civil war.

Not surprisingly, Sierra Leone's prison conditions are among the worst in the world, with severe overcrowding, inadequate nutrition and almost nonexistent sanitation.

Juvenile facilities house numerous war orphans charged with theft—often their only means of survival. Neither juveniles nor adults have access to reentry resources, so many released individuals return to crime to support themselves.

"Sub-Saharan Africa is the poorest region in the world," said CBI president Dr. David Schuringa. "The prisons in Sierra Leone reflect that poverty, which makes CBI's prison ministry of vital importance."

In the midst of these dark and oppressive conditions, CBI is working to bring light and hope. Lahai Kargbo, a young prison minister, is the director of CBI Sierra Leone. Kargbo was rescued by missionaries from being buried alive as a baby and has dedicated his life to serving the Lord.

Kargbo's prison ministry team visits all four Freetown prisons, including two juvenile facilities where young CBI students clutching CBI Bibles are easily recognizable. The team also administers CBI's Bible study courses to Sierra

Leonean prisoners of all ages.

Cynthia Williams, deputy director for international development, recently visited Sierra Leone to assist in the launch of the new campus. She conducted training sessions, led in the commissioning ceremony and spoke to young boys at one of the juvenile facilities.

Williams is optimistic about the results of her visit and the future stability of the campus. "Ties to the local church were strengthened," she said, "and that is crucial for the long-term well-being of a satellite campus."

In a country where conflict is the status quo and even the most basic needs often go unmet, CBI Sierra Leone is ready to reach countless prisoners with the peace and provision of God's love.